

The power of partnership for clean water and sanitation

Access to safe drinking water and adequate sanitation is indispensable for a dignified life, prevents waterborne diseases and saves time for girls and women who fetch water, freeing them for more productive activities. In March 2015, Ethiopia reached the Millennium Development Goal of halving the number of people without access to safe drinking water. The country also achieved a substantial reduction in the percentage of people lacking basic sanitation. This rapid acceleration in water service coverage was a milestone achievement, but there's still a long way to go. To help reach those who are still excluded, we partnered with Amref and Water.org to ensure that a further 29,000 Ethiopians living in underserved areas of the Dera district gain access to water and sanitation services in a sustainable way.

DURATION: 2015-2018

CHALLENGE: Access to Basic Services

COUNTRY: Ethiopia

PARTNER: Amref, Water.org



CONTEXT

Water supply coverage in Ethiopia is on a strong upward trajectory. According to the latest assessment report, 48 million Ethiopians (57% of the country's population) gained access to safe water in the last 15 years, reaching the Millennium Development Goal of halving the number of people without access to safe drinking water. At the same time, Ethiopia also achieved a large reduction in the percentage of people practicing open defecation (from 92% in 1990 to 29% in 2015), an improvement over five times greater than the regional average for the same period (Source: UNICEF/WHO Global Joint Monitoring Programme for Water and Sanitation 2015).

The key to this success has been a combination of strong government leadership and persistent donor investment.

However, despite these remarkable achievements, 42 million Ethiopians still lack access to safe water and 28.3 million still do not have access to basic sanitation, mostly in rural areas.

ACTION

The programme's main objective is to ensure that some 29,000 Ethiopians living in 9 rural communities in the Dera district of the Amhara region gain access to safe water and sanitation services, and are provided with the tools, knowledge and skills they need to manage and maintain the new infrastructure effectively, reducing their vulnerability to waterborne diseases. In the target area, water is mostly collected from rivers, springs and traditional hand-dug wells used both for humans and animals, and open defecation is the norm.

Strongly encouraging cooperation among our partners in the field, we support Water.org and Amref joint and complementary efforts in the region.

Specifically, Water.org is leading:

- The construction or rehabilitation of 100 water systems in the target communities (following a hydrogeological assessment to identify potential water sources).
- The water quality testing and disinfection.
- The construction of drainage canals and fences and other water and soil conservation measures required.
- The infrastructure maintenance training of the communities.

AMREF is leading:

- The construction of 9 latrine blocks (72 seats and 22 shower kiosks) in 7 selected schools in rural areas and in 2 urban communities.
- The establishment of 100 Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Committees (with a total of 700 members selected and trained) to mobilize residents, provide security for the water infrastructures, manage them and collect water fees.
- The selection and training in water, health and sanitation practices of
 - 100 Village Hygiene and Sanitation Communicators
 - 40 to 60 future sanitation entrepreneurs
 - 140 to 210 School Wash Club members
 - Community Leaders in the area.
- The organisation of health and hygiene promotion and awareness activities in the target communities to prompt behavioural change.

Both Water.org and Amref will train and strengthen the capacity of government officers and local staff from the Organisation for Rehabilitation and Development in Amhara (ORDA) in community health and hygiene education activities.

EXPECTED RESULTS

- 28,795 people living in the Dera district gain access to safe drinking water and sanitation in a sustainable solution whereby:

- The quality of the water provided meets the standards required
- The distance travelled to collect water is reduced on average from 4 to 1.5 km
- The time spent collecting drinking water is reduced on average from 90 to 30 minutes.
- 100 Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Committees are established and all 700 members are able to run the water facilities, develop a budget and manage the funds, and are responsible for day-to-day maintenance.
- 2 local micro-enterprises, each employing 20 to 30 vulnerable individuals, are set up to manage the newly-built public latrines and shower kiosks.
- Thanks to health and hygiene education programmes and training activities, government staff, families and school children gain the knowledge and skills to reduce their vulnerability to waterborne diseases and improve their health.

LONG-TERM STRATEGY

The programme's integrated approach, which builds on the complementary expertise of the three partners – Water.org, Amref and ORDA – ensures the solutions are sustainable in the long run, delivering a significant improvement in health indicators in the area. The intervention is aligned with national policies, strategies and health initiatives. Close coordination with the District Water Bureau at every stage of programme design and implementation ensures the harmonization of intents and practices, while avoiding duplication. The active engagement of local communities both in the programme and in the development of an ongoing maintenance fund ensures the water and sanitation facilities are accepted, used correctly and effectively, and managed and protected over time.